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THE
from the Author,

W. Roscoe Esq.
Att. Gen.

March 1844.

WRONGS OF AFRICA,

A P O E M.

PART THE FIRST.

SED POSTQUAM TELLUS SCELERE EST IMBUTA NEFANDO,
JUSTITIAMQUE OMNES CUPIDA DE MENTE FUGARUNT,
PERFUDERE MANUS FRATERNI SANGUINE FRATRES.

CATULLUS.

L O N D O N :

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P R E F A C E.

IT must afford pleasure to every benevolent mind to observe, that the progress of knowledge, while it improves the understanding, leads to the establishment of virtue, freedom, and happiness. A great æra is opening on the earth; discoveries in science are very rapidly increasing the power, amending the condition, and enlarging the views of mankind; and the close of the eighteenth, like that of the fifteenth century, will probably be marked in future times, as a period in which a sudden accession of light burst on the human mind. Happily those important truths which are the result of reason and reflection, are no longer confined to

the recesses of philosophy; they have spread widely into society, and begin to influence the councils of statesmen, and the conduct of nations.

Hence it is not improbable, that the principles of political science may soon undergo an universal change; that probity and good faith may take place of fraud and chicanery in the intercourse of states; contiguity of situation prove the source of friendship instead of hostility between nations; and hatred and bloodshed be exchanged for confidence and peace. Such must be the consequences, when the laws of truth and justice, which are imposed on the transactions of individuals, shall be extended to the conduct of governments towards each other, where kingdoms are at stake, and the happiness of millions involved in the issue.

But though many agreeable effects will most probably flow from this important change, there are other consequences that may ensue, which are greatly

to be dreaded. The spirit of trade may degrade the national character, and endanger our sacrificing the principles of justice and the feelings of humanity to the acquirement of wealth. It becomes us therefore to guard against the introduction of those base and fordid maxims which represent every thing as fair that is lucrative, and separate infamy from villany, provided it be successful.

Britain has been highly favoured of heaven in all the gifts of nature and the acquisitions of art; and the temple of Liberty, first reared by the labour, and cemented by the blood, of our ancestors, has now its foundations eternally fixed on the basis of science and philosophy. But the principles on which the liberties of Britain are established, are of universal application, and may one day extend from the centre of this island to the extremities of the earth.

It is time for those who direct the councils of the nation to turn their eyes on the trade to Africa.—

This traffic in the human species, which is so direct and daring an infringement of every principle of liberty and justice, has attracted the public notice—The more it is examined, the more horrid it will appear; and the voice of reason, aided by the natural feelings of the human heart, must sooner or later achieve its overthrow. But it becomes a wise legislature to interfere without delay; the subject is of deep importance, and calls loudly for the immediate exertions of patriotism and virtue. It would be no difficult matter to shew, that the trade which the Europeans carry on for slaves to Guinea, is the foundation of almost all the miseries which the negroes endure in their own country, as well as in the sugar islands. Those dreadful wars which spread from the shores of the Atlantic to the eastern extremity of Africa, are chiefly undertaken to procure slaves as an exchange for the wares of Europe. It is this trade, which setting justice and humanity at defiance, crowds the unhappy Africans in the foul and pestilential holds of ships, where

where twenty-five thousand perish annually of disease and broken hearts. It is this traffic which places the survivors in the hands of masters whose natural feelings are destroyed by early and continual intercourse with the world of slavery, where their spirits are broken and their bodies wasted by insupportable toils. Lastly, it is this trade which deprives them of those best privileges of our nature, conjugal affection and parental love, the constant supply which it affords compensating the loss of those victims of avarice and cruelty who have died without issue to inherit their misery and their disgrace.—Hence it is, that the waste of life among a people naturally prolific in the extreme, amounts to an eighth part annually; and upwards of an hundred thousand Africans are yearly transported across the Atlantic, to keep up the number of those unhappy men who are doomed to toil, to slavery, and to death.

This mournful truth, while it confutes a thousand arguments drawn by the wretched apologists

of slavery, from the happy condition of the negroes in the West-India islands, suggests other reflections, at which humanity shudders.—It is the interest of the merchants of England, that the condition of the negroes in the colonies should not be meliorated, for otherwise they might multiply in such a manner as to destroy the demand; while on the other hand the planters who can now buy a full-grown African cheaper than they can rear a child from birth till the age of labour, are thus, in the treatment of their slaves, freed from those restraints which interest imposes on the most merciless. Thus it is, that these two species of Christians find their account in the sufferings of the injured Africans; and who after this can wonder that their general treatment is cruel and severe?

That representations such as these should have no influence in a country where men have heads to reason and hearts to feel, is impossible; and before long it is hoped they will have a powerful effect in the senate of
the

the nation. A partial attachment to the errors of their country, cannot be alledged against the politicians of the present day; nor is it easy to see how the traffic in the human species, can be overlooked by those among them who have any pretensions to patriotism or humanity—Nor how those adherents of liberty, who so lately fought the battles of America; when Britain attempted to retain her authority over the colonies she had formed, can view unmoved the real enormities she is daily perpetrating in another quarter of the globe.

Though the author of the following poem has spoken of the slave trade with the abhorrence which it deserves, he would not be thought to involve all who are concerned in it in the charge of deliberate wickedness. The combined influence of custom, of prejudice, and of interest, has, he knows, in all ages afforded melancholy instances, not only of the corruption of the heart, but of the perversion of the understanding; and to this last circumstance he is willing to impute it, that there are English-

men

men deeply engaged in the traffic in the human species (incredible as it may appear) who are, in other respects, men of honour and integrity; and even, as he has been told, of humanity—Such instances are deeply to be deplored.

Feeling for the honour of his country, and for the sufferings of the friendless and injured negroes, the author has attempted to attract public notice to the slave trade, by committing his thoughts to the press in the form of a poem. That which he now offers is the first part of his plan; if this meets attention, it will be continued. It may be thought that he has been warm, and he will not deny it—This however he may say, that he has not used the licence of a poet to deal in fiction—It is with heart-felt sorrow he declares, that on this subject the truth defies the exaggeration of passion, or the embellishments of imagination.

T H E
W R O N G S O F A F R I C A.

P A R T T H E F I R S T.

OFFSPRING of love divine, Humanity!
To whom, his eldest born, th' Eternal gave
Dominion o'er the heart; and taught to touch
Its varied stops in sweetest unison;
And strike the string that from a kindred breast
Responsive vibrates! from the noisy haunts

Of mercantile confusion, where thy voice
 Is heard not; from the meretricious glare
 Of crowded theatres, where in thy place
 Sits Sensibility, with wat'ry eye,
 Dropping o'er fancied woes her useless tear;
 Come thou, and weep with me substantial ills;
 And execrate the wrongs, that Afric's sons,
 Torn from their natal shore, and doom'd to bear
 The yoke of servitude in western climes,
 Sustain. Nor vainly let our sorrows flow,
 Nor let the strong emotion rise in vain,
 But may the kind contagion widely spread,
 Till in its flame the unrelenting heart
 Of Avarice, melt in softest sympathy;—
 And one bright blaze of universal love,
 In grateful incense, rises up to heaven.

Form'd with the same capacity of pain,
 The same desire of pleasure and of ease,
 Why feels not man for man? When nature shrinks

From the flight puncture of an insect's sting,
 Faints if not screen'd from sultry suns, and pines
 Beneath the hardship of an hour's delay
 Of needful nutriment ; when liberty
 Is priz'd so dearly, that the slightest breath
 That ruffles but her mantle, can awake
 To arms, unwarlike nations, and can rouse
 Confederate states to vindicate her claims ;
 How shall the sufferer man, his fellow doom
 To ills he mourns, or spurns at? tear with stripes
 His quivering flesh ; with hunger and with thirst
 Waste his emaciate frame? in ceaseless toils
 Exhaust his vital powers ; and bind his limbs
 In galling chains? Shall he whose fragile form
 Demands continual blessings, to support
 Its complicated texture ; air, and food,
 Raiment, alternate rest, and kindly skies,
 And healthful seasons, dare with impious voice
 To ask those mercies, whilst his selfish aim
 Arrests the general freedom of their course?

And :

And gratified beyond his utmost wish,
 Debars another from the bounteous store?

From her exhaustless springs the fruitful earth
 The wants of all supplies : her children we,
 From her full veins the grateful juices draw,
 With life and health replete ; nor hard return
 She at our hands requires, nor more than suits
 The ends of health and pleasure ; yet bestows
 On all her offspring with a parent's love
 Her gifts impartial : of the self-same frame,
 Alike in passions, appetites, and powers,
 We seize the boon her equal care extends,
 But whilst we grasp it, turn an eye unblest
 Upon a brother's birth-right ; nor desist
 With hands unhallow'd, till by fraud or force
 We call his portion ours ; nor stop we here,
 But bid the plunder'd wretch again return,
 And supplicate again with toil, and tears,
 The general mother ; and as she bestows,

Again

Again we tear the morsel from his hands ;
 An useless booty ! whilst the sufferer droops
 Beneath reiterated wrongs, and dies.

But thou, the master of the sable crew !
 Lord of their lives and ruler of their fate,
 For whom they toil and bleed ! what powers unknown
 Of keen enjoyment can thy nature boast,
 That thus thy single bliss can grasp the sum
 Of hapless numbers, sacrificed to thee ?
 — Say, can their tears delight thee ? Can their groans
 Add poignance to thy pleasures ? Or when death
 Alarms thee with his summons, canst thou add
 The total of their ravish'd lives to thine ?
 Or spring not rather thy detested joys,
 From some perversion of each nobler sense
 Indulgent nature gave thee ? For the glow
 Of melting charity, that looks on all
 With eyes impartial ; and receives delight
 Most exquisite, whene'er her ready aid

Diffuses gladness, or represses pain,
 Thro' the minutest particle of life;
 Feels not thine harden'd breast a horrid bliss
 In the wild shriek of anguish? in the groan
 Of speechless misery? Hence with tyrant voice
 Thou bidst the trembling victim to thy wrath
 Devoted, writhe beneath the torturing whip,
 Or for some trivial fault, (to which compar'd
 The daily crime, which thou without remorse
 Committ'st against him, is as oceans depth,
 To the shoal current of the scantiest rill)
 To mutilation doom'st him, and to death.
 —Dear to the heart is freedom's generous flame,
 And dear th' exulting glow, that warms the soul,
 When struggling virtue from the tyrant's grasp
 Indignant rushes, and asserts her rights;
 But for this nameless transport, thou hast found
 A gloomy substitute, and from the depths
 Of loathsome dungeons, manacles, and chains,
 Canst draw strange pleasure, and preposterous joy.

And

And thou th' inferior minister of ill !
 Inferior in degree, but in thy scorn
 Of every milder virtue, in the love
 Of rapine, and the quenchless thirst of gold
 His more than equal ! O'er th' Atlantic deep,
 That rolls in vain to screen its eastern shores
 From thy fierce purpose, on thou plough'st thy way ;
 And firm, and fearless, as thy voyage were meant
 On messages of mercy, seem'st unmov'd
 The lightnings glare, and hear'st the thunders roll,
 Regardless of their threats ; when o'er the main,
 Rides in dread state the equinoctial blast,
 And swells th' insulted ocean, when thy bark
 (The thin partition 'twixt thy fate and thee)
 Labours thro' all her frame, and loudly threats
 Thine instantaneous doom ; thou still preserv'st
 Thine execrable aim ; nor storms, nor fire,
 Nor fell diseases, nor impending death,
 Arrest thy purpose ; till the distant shores
 Of hapless Afric open on thy sight.

From northern Gambia, to the southern climes
 Of sad ANGOLA, lie the fated lands,
 Whose genius mourns thy coming : wak'd by him,
 In vain the elemental fury rag'd,
 For thou hast triumph'd : joyful on the strand,
 His fable sons receive thy wearied crew ;
 And bid them share their vegetable store,
 Pow'rful to purify the tainted blood,
 And grateful to the palate, long inur'd
 To nutriment half putrid : in return,
 Thou to their dazzled sight disclovest wide
 Thy magazine of wonders, cull'd with care,
 From all the splendid trifles, that adorn
 Thine own luxurious region ; mimic gems
 That emulate the true ; fictitious gold
 To various uses fashion'd, pointing out
 Wants which before they knew not ; mirrors bright,
 Reflecting to their quick and curious eye
 Their fable features ; shells, and beads, and rings,
 And all fantastic folly's gingling bells,

That

That catch'd th' unpractis'd ear, and thence convey
 Their unsuspected poison to the mind.

Yet not delightful pass'd their cloudless days.
 The cheerful natives, ere the wasteful rage
 Of European avarice chang'd the scene ;
 —Strangers alike to luxury and toil,
 They, with assiduous labour, never woo'd
 A coy and stubborn foil, that gave its fruits
 Reluctant ; but on some devoted day,
 Perform'd the task, that for their future lives
 Suffic'd, and to the moist and vigorous earth
 The youthful shoots committed : fervid suns,
 And plenteous showers, the rising juices sent
 Thro' all the turgid branches ; and ere long,
 Screen'd from the scorching beam, beneath the shade
 Himself had rais'd, the careless planter sat ;
 And from the bending branches cropt the fruit ;
 More grateful to his unpurverted taste,
 Than all that glads the glutton's pamper'd meal.

Nor was amusement wanting ; oft at morn,
 Lord of his time, the healthful native rose,
 And seiz'd his faithful bow, and took his way
 Midst tangled woods, or over distant plains,
 To pierce the murd'rous Pard ; when glowing noon
 Pour'd its meridian fervors, in cool shades
 He slept away th' uncounted hours, till eve
 Recall'd him home ; then midst the village train
 He join'd the mazy dance ; then all his pow'rs
 Were wak'd to action ; vigorous and alert,
 He bounded o'er the plain ; or in due time
 Plied his unwearied feet, and beat his hands ;
 Whilst bursts of laughter, and loud shouts of joy,
 Spoke the keen pleasures of th' admiring throng.

But when the active labours of the chase
 No more delighted, in the shady bower
 Idly industrious, fat reclin'd at ease
 The sable artist ; to the jav'lin's shaft,
 The ebon staff, or maple goblet, gave

Fantastic decorations ; simply carv'd,
 Yet not inelegant : beneath his hands,
 Oft too a cloth of firmer texture grew,
 That steep'd in azure, mocks the brittle threads,
 And fleeting tincture, of our boasted arts.
 The task, perform'd beneath no master's eye,
 Of trivial worth esteem'd, successive months
 Unfinish'd saw, whilst objects interven'd,
 Deem'd more important ; that by grateful change,
 Cheer'd the slow progress of his guiltless life.

Nor yet unknown to more refin'd delights,
 Nor to the soft and social feelings lost,
 Was the swart African : wherever man
 Erects his dwelling, whether on the bleak
 And frozen cliffs of Zembla's northern coast,
 Or in meridian regions ; Love attends
 And shares his habitation : in his train
 Come fond affections, come endearing joys,
 And confidence, and tenderness, and truth ;

For

For not to polish'd life alone confin'd,
 Are these primæval blessings ; rather there
 Destroyed, or injured ; mercenary ties
 There bind ill suited tempers ; avarice there,
 And pride, and low'ring superstition, cross
 The tender union ; but where nature reigns,
 And universal freedom, love exults
 As in his native clime ; there aims secure
 His brightest arrow, steep'd in keen delights,
 To cultur'd minds, and colder skies, unknown.

Dark, and portentous, as the sable cloud,
 That bears unseen contagion on its wings,
 And drops destruction on the race of man,
 Came the foul plague, that, brought from Europe,
 spread

O'er Afric's peaceful shores, with sudden change
 Perverting good, to evil : at the sight
 Nature recoil'd, and tore with frantic hands
 Her own immortal features : broke at once,

Were all the bonds of social life, and rage,
 And deadly hatred, and uncheck'd revenge,
 In every bosom burn'd. The dance, the song
 Were now no more, for treachery's secret snare
 Impended o'er their revels, and distrust
 Had alienated man from man: no more,
 At early dawn, o'er hills and plains unknown,
 The hunter took his solitary range,
 Left, fiercer than the tyger or the pard,
 He there shou'd meet his fellows, and become
 Himself the prey. Then mutual wars arose,
 And neighbouring states, that never knew before
 A motive of contention, took the field;
 Not with the glorious hope of conquest fir'd,
 But with detested avarice, to purloin
 Their foes, and sell to Europe's shameless race,
 Their unoffending neighbours; soon themselves
 To share their lot, and mourn the self-same chains.

But say, whence first th' unnatural trade arose,

And what the strong inducement, that cou'd tempt
 Such dread perversion? Cou'd not Afric's wealth,
 Her ivory, and her granulated gold,
 To her superfluous, well repay the stores,
 (Superfluous too) from distant Europe sent;
 But liberty and life must be the price,
 And man become the merchandize and spoil?
 — O, when with slow, and hesitating voice,
 The wily European first propos'd
 His hateful barter, that some patriot *hand*,
 Urg'd with prophetic rage, had slopt the source
 Of future ill, and deep within his breast
 The deadly weapon buried!—whilst aloof
 Stood his pale brethren, paler then with fear;
 And shuddering at the awful deed, had learnt
 'To venerate th' eternal rights of man.

Artful, and fair, and eloquent of speech,
 Was the first tempter, that in Eden's groves,
 Guiltless before, brought sin, and pain, and death:

And fair, and artful, were the cultur'd train,
 That wound the snare round Afric's thoughtless sons,
 And dragg'd them to perdition. In their eyes
 Bright shine the splendid stores; around them throng
 The wondering natives; and with strange delight,
 Gaze on their novel beauties; as they gaze,
 New wishes rise, which, gratified in part,
 And part restrain'd, and heighten'd by delay,
 Wake the dread lust of having. What their climes
 Of rich, or rare, for ornament, or use,
 Afford, they glad resign; but still unbought
 Remains the shining treasure, far beyond
 All possible equivalent; for vain
 Were all the proffer'd gifts, that highest stood
 In the poor native's estimate; his bow,
 His reedy arrows, or the dappled skin
 Won from the leopard in the dangerous chace.
 Mean time impetuous rose the fierce desire,
 And, like a sudden deluge, swept along
 The sense of right uncultur'd nature gave,

Each softer feeling, every social tie,
 And mark'd th' arrival of the dreadful hour.
 —The European caught the favouring time;
 And with bland speech, and soften'd smile, propos'd
 A prize, that might the splendid booty win,
 —A brother's sacrifice.—

Safe on the sheltering coast of wide Benin,
 The stately vessel rode; and now the sun,
 Deep in the western flood had quench'd his fires;
 And the wan moon, in heav'n's opposing scale,
 Hung her pale lamp; that o'er the breezy main,
 Scatter'd its broken radiance—all was still—
 When dim, beneath the sober beam of night,
 Was seen the light canoe, that tow'rd the ship
 Its hasty course directed: in it sat
 Arebo and Corymbo, brothers they,
 And till this fatal moment more attach'd
 By friendship than by nature; but too weak
 Were nature's ties, or friendship's closer bonds,

And

And in the element of fierce desire,
 Their brittle hold resign'd. Corymbo doom'd
 His brother to captivity, and lur'd
 To share the feign'd excursion, and partake
 The evening revel, with the morning light
 Again to seek the shore. They reach the ship—
 A shout of joy salutes them; on the deck
 Corymbo leaps, whilst trembling close behind
 Arebo follows, scarce as yet resolv'd
 To share the banquet; on the distant shore
 He turn'd his eyes, and felt his spirits sink
 In strange dejection; sudden fear impell'd
 His steps, and from the vessel's tow'ring height,
 He sought to plunge for safety in the flood:
 —But ah! too late—superior strength restrains
 His vain attempt; and insults, stripes, and chains,
 Fill the sad series of his future days.

Mean time Corymbo, struck with conscious guilt,
 Turn'd from the conflict; and in haste requir'd

The promis'd bounty. This be thy reward,
 Cried, with malicious smile, the watchful fiend
 That first devis'd the treachery, and display'd
 His implements of torture, whips, and bonds.
 —Deep in the centre of the floating pile,
 Were thrown the hapless brothers, there to pass
 The changing moons, till in the western world
 New woes awaited them, whilst mutual hate
 Sharpen'd each pang, and doubled every ill.

Thus blasted were the joys of private life;
 And the fair fruit of confidence, receiv'd
 A canker in its core, that all unseen
 To poison turn'd its salutary powers.
 —But these were trivial injuries, confin'd
 To private wrong; and like the fever's rage,
 Sought but precarious victims for their prey:
 But soon the epidemic madness swell'd
 To pestilential fury, and involv'd
 Surrounding nations in one general doom.

Nor only then, beneath the gloom of night,
 In the lone path, the fable ruffian lurk'd,
 Watchful to seize and fell for usefess toys,
 His weaker fellow ; but deluded states
 Avow'd the public measure ; to the field
 March'd forth contending armies, unprovok'd
 By previous wrong, to wage unnatural war :
 Whilst he, the white deceiver, who had sown
 The seeds of discord, saw with horrid joy
 The harvest ripen to his utmost wish ;
 And reap'd the spoils of treachery, guilt, and blood.

Deep in the shady covert of a wood,
 That screen'd from noon-day rage the flight-built
 bowers,
 And distant far from ocean's heaving tides,
 Lay a small hamlet ; whose inglorious sons,
 Were strangers yet to war ; save when provok'd
 By hunger's call, the monsters of the waste
 Attack'd their dwellings. O'er the lone retreat

Sail'd

Sail'd the dim cloud of night, and thro' the trees
 Sigh'd the soft gale, and hush'd to deep repose
 The guiltless tenants ; when a sudden fire
 Involv'd their habitations ; thro' the flames
 They rush'd for safety ; but a numerous throng
 Of native ruffians, from a distant shore,
 Attack'd the helpless crew, and bore away
 Their trembling victims : loudly rose the voice
 Of anguish, whilst the mother for her child
 Struggled with frantic violence, and dar'd
 Th' extreme of danger ; whilst the lover clasp'd
 The mistress of his choice, and rais'd his breast
 To meet the threat'ned blow ; whilst youth, alarm'd,
 Truſted to flight for safety, and the tear
 Of supplicating age was pour'd in vain :
 —Fond tears, and vain attempts ! shall mercy rest
 In savage bosoms, when the cultur'd mind
 Disclaims her influence ? From their peaceful home
 For ever torn, and chain'd in long array,
 The mourning sufferers move along the plain,

A spectacle of woe; and frequent turn
 Their tear-dimmi'd eyes towards the fav'rite spot
 That gave them birth, and saw their youthful sports;
 Whose streams had cool'd their thirst, whose forests
 dark

Had screen'd their slumbers, and whose varied scenes
 Had witness'd all their joys. They turn, and mourn
 Their simple threshold now with kindred blood
 Defil'd; their roofs of rapid flames the prey;
 The partners of their pleasures now condemn'd
 To share their lot, or pouring out their lives
 Beneath untented wounds.—They turn and weep,
 Whilst o'er the burning sand the frequent goad
 Hastens their lingering steps, till on their flight
 Opens th' extended ocean: hovering near,
 Like some dread monster, watchful for its prey,
 The vessel glooms portentous; soon to seize
 Her living victims, and to whelm them deep
 In the dark cavern of her loathsome womb.

O might we here absolve the theme, and hide
 Beneath th' impenetrable veil of night
 New scenes of horror ; happy so to spare
 The blush, that else must tinge th' ingenuous cheek ;
 To spare the tear of pity, nor provoke
 The sudden imprecation that will burst
 From plain integrity, when open wrong
 Wantons secure in guilt.—And let it burst,
 And let the cheek with burning blushes glow,
 And pity pour her tears : for is not Man
 The author of the wrong ? And shall not they,
 In colour, nation, faith,—associate all—
 Who see, yet not resent it ; hear of it,
 Yet stand regardless ; know it, yet partake
 The luxuries it supplies ; shall these not feel
 The keen emotions of remorse and shame ?
 And learn this truth severe, that whilst they shun
 The glorious conflict, nor assist the cause
 Of suffering nature, **THEY PARTAKE THE GUILT ?**

Come then, ye generous few, whose hearts can feel
 For stranger sorrows; who can hear the voice
 Of misery breathe across th' Atlantic main,
 Diminish'd not by distance!—Ye too come,
 Ye patrons of distress, beneath whose smile
 Exulting charity beholds with joy
 The numerous temples rising to her fame;
 Where age in peace reposes, where the young
 A safe asylum find; where sickness smiles,
 And hunger meets relief! Come, and with me
 Descend that floating dungeon's dark recess,
 To air scarce pervious; where in numbers pil'd,
 And closely wedg'd within the scanty breadth
 Of calculated inches, pass their hours
 The victims of our avarice.—Tell me, then,
 Did ever he, the glory of our isle,
 Our new ALCIDES, in whose conquering grasp
 The serpents of oppression droop'd and died;
 Who now essays his heavenly temper'd spear
 Against the eastern Python's deadly rage:

Immortal

Immortal HOWARD! when with fearless step
 He trac'd pale misery to her last recess,
 Midst putrid vapours and infectious damps,
 Th' abodes of harden'd guilt—Did ever he
 Behold a sight so dreadful? where the dead
 Press on the dying; where the parting groan
 Is heard without compassion, or excites
 The living wretches envy; where debarr'd
 From every blessing, and from every hope,
 Death comes not at their bidding, but selects
 With wayward choice his favorites; harshly kind,
 Dissolves the bond, and mocks the tyrant's rage?

A truce with declamation:—thus methinks
 I hear some veteran trafficker in blood,
 Whose leisure—by repeated crimes procur'd—
 Is us'd to justify those crimes, reply :
 —Peace to your declamation, nor presume
 To judge another's feelings.—Is it yours,
 A stranger to the scene, to tell the cares,

The anxious days, the busy, restless nights,
 Devoted to the succour of the slaves
 When visited by sickness? Is it yours
 To tell what arts are us'd, the healing arts
 Of cultivated Europe ; to appease
 The recent pang, or stop the spreading rage
 Of fierce contagion? But suppose we grant
 What you assume unjustly, that our ears
 Are shut to misery's voice ; our harden'd hearts
 Lost to the social sympathies of man ;
 Ye will not sure deny, that still we feel
 The potent charm of interest ; and with her
 Ev'n shou'd humanity refuse to join,
 She here becomes her substitute, and leads
 To equal blessings : 'tis not then enough
 You prove us void of feeling ; you must shew
 Our folly far exceeds our guilt, or see
 Your blunted darts, from truth's bright shield, recoil.

And who shall rob you of your just applause !

Ye watchful guardians of the subject crew,
 That curse the lives ye cherish? 'Tis, we own,
 No common case, to shut the gates of death
 On those who wish to pass them; to retain
 Within its suffering bound, th' indignant soul
 That pants for freedom, as the hunted hart
 That seeks the coolness of the chrystal spring:
 And when the tyrant of the harmless flock,
 That whilst he feeds them, destines them to death,
 Is call'd humane, ye then may justly boast
 The glorious appellation: 'Tis enough
 Mean time for you, if life and health remain
 Amongst your captives, till they reach the shores
 Of those polluted Islands, that too soon
 Shall realize the evils which they dread.
 --Then ends your sympathy—and whether there
 Long years of suffering waste by slow degrees
 Their vital powers, or violence deform
 Their mutilated limbs, or hunger gnaws,
 Or sickness preys upon them, unconcern'd

Ye give them to their fate; as Jacob's sons
 Sold their more righteous brother; nor inquire
 What ills to suffer, or what deaths to die.

Most fitly then ye throw aside the veil,
 That not conceals, but more deforms your crimes,
 Tinging their features with the loathsome hue
 Of foul hypocrisy: and right ye deem,
 When scorning pity's softer ties, ye own
 That avarice only prompts the deed humane,
 Which seems to claim a fairer origin.

—But why with foolish fondness wou'd you strive
 To dress a devil in an angel's garb,
 And bid mankind adore him?—Can it be,
 That he, the foulest fiend that ever stalk'd
 Across the confines of this suffering world;
 He, the dread spirit of commercial gain,
 Whose heart is marble, and whose harpy hands
 Are stain'd with blood of millions; can it be,
 That he shou'd personate the form divine

Of soft compassion, and perform the task
 To her mild cares and lenient hand assign'd?
 —It is not his, on misery's bleeding wounds
 To pour the soothing balm; to raise the head
 That droops in sickness; timely to supply
 The healing potion; and the bitter cup
 Sweeten with words of sympathy. To him,
 Of all that breathes, indifferent is the fate;
 And whilst one hand the cordial drop sustains,
 The other grasps a dagger; thus prepar'd,
 With life, and death, he balances the scale,
 And as the beam preponderates, saves, or kills.

But say, ye shameless sophists! who compress'd
 Within the confines of that iron grate,
 Its struggling tenants, who for air and food
 Incessant clamour? 'Twas not she whose name
 Ye now profan'd; beneath whose kindling smile
 All animated nature leaps with joy;
 She, from whose streaming eyes, your murd'rous deeds

Draw tears of blood—No, 'twas the hated power
 Of unrelenting avarice, that with her
 Late claim'd unnatural union; and assur'd
 Himself her substitute: Infatiate he,
 Whilst thirst of gain absorb'd each other sense,
 Pour'd in his cavern deep, throng after throng,
 His living victims; with his iron mace,
 Crush'd, and condens'd their ranks, and o'er them
 clos'd

Th' impenetrable barrier.—Grimly then,
 Like him of yore, that in his blood-stain'd cave
 Confin'd the wandering Greeks, he sat and smil'd,
 And brooded o'er his treasures, now esteem'd
 Irrevocably his.—Deluded fool!

The cup, thy giddy rage has fill'd too high,
 Like that of Tantalus shall soon o'erflow,
 And leave thee wondering at the sudden void.
 For nature, Proteus like, when long confin'd
 Delights to change her form: fermenting flow,
 Her silent work commences; scarce perceiv'd

Its hidden progress, till the heaven reach
 The principle of being, to new forms
 And combinations tending: Then uncheck'd
 Rages the wild contagion.—Vainly then,
 The tyrant opens wide his iron gate,
 And bids the fainting wretch once more imbibe
 The fragrant gales of day; or o'er him pours
 In copious streams th' invigorating lymph:
 —Ah see, his palsied lips refuse to taste
 The kind astringent; sudden tremors shake
 His limbs; his glaring eye-balls roll in death;
 And unreluctant, from its wearied frame,
 Flies the freed spirit:— Yet not seeks alone
 The promis'd regions of eternal spring;
 But mingling with the kindred souls, whose bonds
 Each passing hour dissevers, hovers o'er
 The scene, and bids its lov'd companions haste,
 And share the sweets of freedom: or delights
 To glance before the tyrant's fear-struck sight;
 Mock at his anguish, feast upon the fears

That agitate his bosom, whilst he sees
 The spirit of disease his folly rais'd,
 Roam unconfin'd; and in one common fate,
 Involve at once th' oppressor, and the slave.

Nations of Europe! o'er whose favour'd lands
 Philosophy hath rais'd her light divine,
 (A brighter sun than that which rules the day)
 Beneath whose piercing beam, the spectre forms
 Of slavish superstition flow retire!
 Who greatly struggling with degrading chains,
 Have freed your limbs from bondage! felt the charms
 Of property! beyond a tyrant's lust
 Have plac'd domestic bliss! and soon shall own
 That noblest freedom, freedom of the mind,
 Secure from priestly craft and papal claims!
 —But chiefly thou, the mistress of the main,
 Who sits serene amidst thy subject waves,
 That bring thee hourly tribute; Queen of Isles,
 Of faith unblemish'd, of unconquer'd soul,

And

And prizing freedom dearer than the blood
 That circles round thine heart! O Albion, say,
 And say, ye sister kingdoms; why remains
 This universal blot, that marks your brows
 With black ingratitude; and tells high heaven
 You merit not your blessings? Why remains
 This foul and open wound on nature's limb,
 Wasting its healthful powers? (and who shall tell
 How far may spread th' infection?) Blush ye not
 To boast your equal laws, your just restraints,
 Your rights defin'd, your liberties secur'd,
 Whilst with an iron hand ye crush to earth
 The helpless African; and bid him drink
 That cup of sorrow, which yourselves have dash'd
 Indignant, from oppression's fainting grasp?
 —O Britain! jealous of thy private rights,
 Like some fond mother, with a partial eye
 Thou see'st thine offspring; and shou'd fraud, or force,
 Attempt to tear them from thee; soon wou'd rise
 Thy kindling spirit, and th' insidious foe

Wou'd

Wou'd feel thy ready vengeance : And shalt thou
 Incroach upon another? Shall thine hand
 Be stain'd with murder? Or with paltry theft
 Polluted? Or abandon'd to thy shame,
 Canst thou receive the produce of the crimes
 Thy sons commit, and from thy tow'ring state
 Affect to know not of them? High in rank
 Amidst furrounding nations; high in fame;
 In public spirit high; and high in wealth;
 Forget not, Britain, higher still than thee
 Sits the great Judge of Nations, who can weigh
 The wrong, and can repay. Before his throne
 Confess thy weakness; nor with impious voice
 Arraign th' immutable decree, that fix'd
 The bounds of wrong and right; that gave to all
 Their equal blessings, and secures its ends
 By penalties severe; which often flow,
 But always certain, on the guilty head,
 Pour down the terrors of the wrath divine.

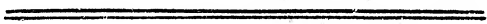
Roscoe

John F. M. Donastor,
from the Author,

W. Roscoe Esq.

Albion.

March 1844.



T H E

W R O N G S O F A F R I C A,

A P O E M by W. Roscoe

Part II.



T H E
W R O N G S o f A F R I C A ,

A P O E M.

PART THE SECOND.

— FOR OF WHOM SUCH MASSACRE
MAKE THEY BUT OF THEIR BRETHREN, MEN OF MEN ?

MILTON.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET.

MDCCLXXXVIII.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Author had flattered himself, that the scheme of his whole Poem would have been sufficiently evident from the first part; but having heard it urged as an objection against his work, that it was defective in its plan, he thinks it necessary to mention, that his original idea was to finish it in three parts; the first of which was intended to extend to the mode of procuring slaves on the coast of Africa—the second, to the voyage from thence to the West-Indian Islands—and the third, to the destination of the slaves, and the severities exercised on them in the colonies.—The first part, accordingly, will be found to be confined to its proper purpose; the second continues the subject, and the Author is in hopes the whole will be comprehended in the third part, though the multiplicity of materials prevents him at present from fixing any precise bounds to his work, which may also possibly be abridged, by circumstances that may in some degree invalidate the motives which first prompted the Author to this undertaking.

T H E

W R O N G S o f A F R I C A.

P A R T T H E S E C O N D.

FAIR is this fertile spot, which God assign'd
As man's terrestrial home; where every charm
Attracts his unperverted sense, and fills
His heart with gladness: to his raptur'd sight
Th' extended landscape opens; chearful green
Invests the lawn; luxuriant forests wave;

The chryſtal ſtream irriguous winds its way,
 And heaven's bright azure canopies the whole.
 Soft on his ear the voice of muſic breathes
 In grateful undulations : odours ſweet
 From herbs and trees, from flowers of varied hue,
 Salute him, and in ſilent whiſpers bring
 The pleaſing promiſe of the future year.
 —Form'd with a ſoul to reliſh all their charms,
 Man, wanders o'er their beauties unconfin'd,
 And lauds their Author : when ſome fiend malign,
 O'er all the ſcene his blighting influence ſheds,
 And bids it ficken on the fated ſenſe,
 To loathing and diſguſt.—And ſhall the ſun,
 E'er from the eaſt his glorious courſe begin,
 And not be bleſt by man? or that mild orb
 That rules the hours of night, and ſooths to peace
 The tides of paſſion, hear th' inſulting voice
 Of hopeleſs anguiſh, that perverſe arraigns
 Her light, and bids her never more return?
 —Yes——thanks to man, the ſcourge of all his kind,
 And traitor to himſelf; who never yet

Has rais'd his bounded views beyond the scope
 Of selfish pleasure, and immediate good.
 —Yes, thanks to man; whose follies, and whose crimes,
 Change the fair face of nature, and pervert
 Her dearest gifts to evil:—breathes the air
 Its healthful fragrance, his misguided rage
 With foul contagion loads its dropping wings,
 Swept from the carnage of the reeking field.
 O'er the broad ocean, whose encircling arms
 Were meant to join the far dis sever'd land
 In friendly intercourse, and wide diffuse
 The blessings of each different state to all,
 His mad ambition, sends in dread array,
 His messengers of terror; prompt to pour
 Their fiery vengeance, on each distant shore,
 Whose natives, to his absolute command,
 Their soil, their produce, liberties, and lives,
 Resign not. He, amidst the spicy climes
 Of Asia, where prolific nature pours
 Her unappropriate, and superfluous wealth,

Within his hoarded magazine confines
 A nation's produce; and around its doors,
 With lifted hands, and unaccusing voice,
 Hears the meek native supplicate for food,
 And bids him perish; and, as tho' he fear'd
 Some happier spot of earth should yet remain,
 That bore not bleeding witness of his guilt,
 He, from their parent-shore, relentless tears
 The sons of Afric; to the madding wave,
 To strange diseases, to the piercing taunts
 Of wanton insolence, and all the wrongs
 That man from man can suffer, dooms their days!

Deep freighted now with human merchandize,
 The vessel quits the shore; prepar'd to meet
 The storms, and dangers, of th' Atlantick main;
 Her motion scarce observ'd, save when the flood
 In frequent murmurs beats against her prow,
 And the tall cocoas slowly seem to change
 Their former station. Lessening on the sight,
 The distant mountains bow'd their cloud capt heads;

And all the bright and variegated scene,
 Of hills, and groves, and lawns, and reed-built sheds,
 That oft had caught the prisoner's ardent eye,
 Not hopeless of escape, now gradual sunk
 To one dim hue. Amongst the fable tribes
 Soon spread th' alarm; when sudden from the depths
 Of crowded holds, and loathsome caverns, rose
 One universal yell, of dread despair,
 And anguish inexpressible; for now
 Hope's slender thread was broke; extinguish'd now
 The spark of expectation, that had lurk'd
 Beneath the ashes of their former joys,
 And o'er despondency's surrounding gloom,
 Had shed its languid lustre. Bold, and fierce,
 Of high indignant spirit, some their chains
 Shook menacing, and from their low'ring eyes,
 Flash'd earnest of the flame that burnt within:
 Whilst groans, and loud laments, and scalding tears,
 Mark'd the keen pangs of others.—Female shrieks,
 At intervals, in dreadful concert heard,

To wild distraction manly sorrow turn'd ;
 And ineffectual, o'er their heedless limbs,
 Was wav'd the wiry whip, that dropp'd with blood.

Now sunk the mournful day ; but mournful still
 The night that followed : and the rising morn,
 That spread before the hopeless captives view,
 Nought, but the wide expanse of air, and sea,
 Heard all their cries with double rage renew'd.
 Nor did the storm of headstrong passions rest,
 Till the third evening clos'd ; nor by degrees
 Was hush'd ; but sudden as th' autumnal blast,
 Its rage exhausted sinks at once to rest ;
 Whilst the wide wood, that bow'd beneath its course,
 Declines its wearied branches, thus the strife
 Ceas'd—not a groan, and not a voice was heard ;
 But, as one soul had influenc'd every breast,
 A fullen stillness reign'd. Resign'd and mild,
 As if forgot their former sense of wrong,
 They took the scanty fare they lately spurn'd ;
 And if a tear should mingle with their food,

No prying eye perceiv'd it: day by day
 Saw the same scene renew'd; whilst prosperous gales
 Full towards her destin'd port the vessel bore;
 And gently breathing o'er the seaman's mind,
 Came the remembrance of his native land;
 The thoughts of former pleasures, former friends,
 Of rest and independance; heedless he,
 That on the miseries of others, rose
 The fabrick of his joys; and gratified
 His selfish views, whilst multitudes bewail'd
 Th' eternal loss of nature's dearest gifts;
 To them irreparable wrong, to him
 A slight accession to his stores of bliss.

'Twas night; and now the ship, with steady course,
 Pursued her midway voyage: subsided now
 The tyrant's dread, a more indulgent lot
 The slaves experienc'd; and their chains relax'd
 Their biting cincture. Fearless trod the deck
 The unsuspecting guard; whilst, from below,
 Amidst the croud of captives, not a sound

Of louder note ascended. Yet, even then,
 Each eye was wake, and ev'ry heaving breast
 Was panting for revenge. For now approach'd
 The awful hour, long hop'd for, long forefix'd,
 Sacred to vengeance, to the thirst of blood,
 And bitter retribution. Slowly roll'd
 The moments, whilst with anxious minds, the slaves
 Waited the voice that loos'd them from restraint,
 And turn'd them on their tyrants : not more prompt
 The nitrous grain, that, at the touch of fire,
 Bursts in resifless flame. Nor yet the voice
 Is heard ; but thro' each deep and dark recess
 A hollow murmur rises, that upbraids
 The long delay—nor yet the voice is heard !
 Whilst in each agitated breast, by turns,
 Difmay, and doubt, and desperation reign ;
 And fancy, now triumphant, now depreſs'd,
 Luxuriant wantons thro' the ſcene of blood,
 Or feels the fiery torture.—“ Rise, revenge,
 “ Revenge your wrongs,” th' expected voice exclaims,

And

And meets a ready answer, from the tongues
 Of countless numbers, from each gloomy cell,
 In dreadful cries return'd. But who shall tell
 The wild commotion ; who the frantic rage
 Of savage fury, when, with joint accord,
 They burst th' opposing gratings, and pour'd forth,
 Impetuous as the flood that breaks its mound ?
 —What tho' unarm'd !—upon th' unsparing steel
 They rush'd regardless ; and th' expected wound
 Deep, but not always deadly, rous'd their minds
 To fiercer desperation : thronging close,
 Fearless, and firm, they join'd th' unequal war ;
 And when the fatal weapon pierc'd their side,
 They struggled to retain it, and in death
 Disarm'd the hand that conquer'd.—Thick they fell,
 But oft not unreveng'd, for fastening close
 Upon the foe some gain'd the vessel's side,
 And rush'd together to a watry death ;
 Whilst from the yawning hold, emerging throngs
 Replac'd the vanquish'd, and, with hideous cries,

Struck

Struck terror thro' the tyrants chilling veins,
 And bad oppression tremble. Nerveless stood
 The harden'd seamen : but recovering soon,
 They gain'd the barrier, that across the deck
 Its firm defence projected ; then began
 The scene of blood ; then pour'd amongst the slaves,
 Frantic, and fierce, and madding with their wrongs,
 The volley'd vengeance ; whilst without a foe,
 Misguided courage urg'd the strife in vain ;
 And check'd by hands unseen, relax'd its powers
 In sudden weakness.—Terror, and surprise,
 Like deadly blood-hounds, seiz'd the vanquish'd crew,
 That stood defenceless, and expos'd, the mark
 Of uncontroll'd revenge ; and as they fell,
 Without reluctance saw the purple stream,
 Slow welling from the fount of life, and join'd
 In kindred currents pour along the deck,
 Tinging with guiltless blood the western wave.

But hark ! the sound of conquest and of joy
 Bursts from th' exulting victors.—Hark again !

The

The thrice repeated triumph, tells the heavens,
 That innocence once more has felt the fangs,
 Th' insatiate fangs of guilt, and weeps in blood
 Her just resistance, and her rightful aims !

Peace to your shades, ye favour'd train, who fell
 Amidst the generous struggle : o'er whose limbs
 The friendly hand of Death, has interpos'd
 His fated curtain ; that, nor human force,
 Nor human malice, nor the deep regret
 Of disappointed avarice, nor the pang
 Of keen remorse, that gnaws the murderer's peace,
 And blasts his future joys, can e'er remove.

—Secure beneath its guardian gloom, ye sleep,
 In undisturb'd repose : no more ye start
 At misery's kindred shriek ; no more ye weep
 O'er fond domestic ties, untimely torn ;
 No longer from th' oppressor's hand, ye ask
 The slender pittance, that prolongs your lives
 To lengthen'd anguish ; nor for you prepares,

Th' unfeeling planter, 'midst his cultur'd isles,
 (Isles moist with tears, and fertiliz'd with blood)
 His whips, his racks, his gibbets, and his chains.
 ——Yours is the palm of conquest;—you have found
 A shelter from the hovering storm, that waits
 Your less successful fellows; who lament,
 And vainly wish to share your happier lot.

Yet not beneath oblivion's gloom to rest,
 Nor meet the tribute of promiscuous praise,
 Was doom'd Cymbello.—Where Bancora pours,
 Towards Zaire's broad flood his tributary wave,
 And cools the fervid equatorial gale,
 Cymbello first drew breath.—His father sway'd
 Monfol's imperial sceptre.—To a form
 Of faultless mold, Cymbello join'd a soul,
 Firm, generous, comprehensive; keen to mark,
 Wise to approve, and active to pursue
 Each nobler object.—Anxious for his fame,
 The watchful father, to Matomba's care

Assign'd

Assign'd the rising virtues of the youth,
 Ere in the fun-like flattery of a court,
 Had shrunk their native vigour.—“ Go,” said he,
 “ Go, and beneath Matomba’s peaceful roof
 “ Pass thy young hours ; and taste those vernal sweets,
 “ That wait not on thy riper years, ordain’d
 “ To be thy country’s sacrifice.—His hand
 “ Shall check each wandering step that turns to ill,
 “ And by obeying, thou shalt learn to rule.”

Remote from peopled haunts, ’midst silent groves,
 Where palms, and plantains, intermix’d their shade,
 And spread their broad leaves to the scorching sun,
 Matomba’s dwelling stood.—A chrystal stream
 Gush’d from the gloom, and lav’d a chosen spot,
 That own’d his constant culture : Aloes there
 Shot forth their vigorous stems, and hung their bells
 In grateful negligence ; Hæmanthus spread
 His crimson bloom ; the flowery Almond there,
 Profuse of fragrance, scented all the plain,

And the gay Protea wav'd his silvery leaf,
 And glitter'd on the day.—A thousand plants,
 The favourites of the sun, whose vivid tints
 Decay, and sicken, in our northern climes,
 There in perennial lustre smil'd, nor fear'd
 The chilling blasts of Eurus.—To the shades
 Of this secure retreat, Matomba led
 His royal pupil; with assiduous eye
 Watch'd o'er his opening mind ; and as he mark'd
 The rising spark of curiosity,
 Disclose its lambent blaze, with temperate hand
 Supplied its cravings, from the boundless store
 Of nature, culling what might best supply
 His pleasing purpose ; first, the various tribes
 Of vegetative life, their scent, their hue,
 Their beauteous conformation, and their change,
 Display'd a wondrous volume.—Rising hence
 To animated being, wonder grew
 To admiration ; whilst the master's voice
 Explain'd the different habits, and the laws,

Of these, that touch'd with more ethereal ray,
 In flood, and forest, deep beneath the earth,
 Or thro' the fields of air, delighted feel
 The consciousness of being.—Thence with man,
 Prime work of Heaven, he dignified his theme;
 And, with resistless energy, impress'd
 Upon the stripling's mind, the generous truths
 That man to man is equal; that the rights
 Which liberal nature gave alike to all,
 Tho' often crush'd beneath the hand of power,
 Can perish but with life;—that states were form'd
 For social purposes: that he who claims
 From subject throngs allegiance and support,
 Owes in return, his confidence, his love,
 His vigilance:—that royalty abus'd
 Is worse than treason; and the sovereign name,
 A feather'd toy, that weighs not in the scale
 Of universal justice.—Stern he heard,
 Nor shrunk the youth to hear the sacred strain;
 And whilst his throbbing heart confess'd its power,

And

And the mild lustre of benevolence,
 Illum'd his swimming eye, " Be mine," he cry'd,
 " To guard my people's rights ; and if I tear
 " With impious hands the web of public faith,
 " Or stain its native lustre, may the steel
 " Of high vindictive freedom purge the guilt."

Blest were the hours, whilst here the princely youth
 Imbib'd instruction; interrupted oft
 By vigorous exercise, and grateful toil,
 For not the filken bonds of indolence
 Restrain'd his ardent spirit.—Every scene
 To him was pleasure ; but a softer hue
 Allay'd their glowing tints, a milder charm
 Endear'd their beauties, when Kiaza shar'd
 His devious path, and on his faithful arm
 Reclin'd.—Of gentlest manners was the maid,
 Matomba's daughter ! sweeter than the breeze
 That steals the Caltha's fragrance, and as chaste
 As the cool beam of evening—yet she lov'd,
 Nor fought the blameless passion to conceal.

But years fly swift away, and swifter far
 When pleasure plumes their wings. From sweet repose,
 From love, and leisure, to the active sphere
 Of public life, the royal youth withdrew :
 Yet not to pomp, or pride, did love resign
 His empire ; often from the crowded court,
 To good Matomba's roof the prince retir'd,
 Delighted to recall those happier hours
 When life was new, to trace the conscious scenes
 Of past delights, whose unembitter'd charm
 Was dear to memory, and in lonely shades
 Renew the promise of perpetual truth.

It chanc'd one evening, when the cooler hour
 Invited, and refreshing breezes blew,
 Along the grassy path, Cymbello led
 His lov'd companion.—O'er the chequer'd scene
 The moon with interrupted radiance shone ;
 And in fantastic shapes, athwart the gloom,
 Cocoas, and pines, their giant shadows threw.

But

But nor th' untimely hour, nor lengthen'd way,
 Abridg'd the tale of love; renewing still,
 And still renewing its exhaustless theme;
 When sudden, as the crouching tyger springs
 Upon his prey, rush'd from a neighbouring brake,
 A troop of black banditti; that debauch'd
 By European arts, had wander'd far
 In search of human plunder. On the pair
 They seiz'd, relentless; from the struggling grasp
 Of strong affection tore them; nor indulg'd
 The last sad hope, to breathe a fond farewell
 To all their past endearments: pinion'd close,
 O'er distant mountains, and thro' trackless plains,
 They bore their princely victim; nor delay'd
 By day or night their haste, till on the shore,
 The white receivers grasp'd their prize; and paid
 With useless wares, with baubles, and with toys,
 The sacrilegious rape: with manacles
 Compress'd his wrist; with ignominious chains,
 Loaded his freeborn limbs; and midst the steam

Of putrid exhalations thrust him deep,
 Beneath the world of waters; that refus'd,
 Tho' often call'd, to whelm him in their waves,
 And shield him from indignity, and shame.

Torn by conflicting passions, bar'd from air,
 With taunts and stripes insulted, and compell'd
 To share the anguish of desponding throngs,
 That hourly curs'd existence, soon began
 His vigor to decline; and on her throne,
 Sat reason tottering. Sleep refus'd to close
 His eyes; that gazing wild with maniac glare,
 Froze in their sockets,—when before their orbs
 Rose a majestic form; that not confin'd
 Within the ship's scant boundary, rear'd her head
 Amidst the rolling clouds. Her right hand held
 A falchion dropping blood; and in her left
 A heart yet palpitating, shock'd the sight.
 Dreadful she smil'd, yet in her dreadful smile
 Lurk'd fascination: horrid was her voice,
 Yet did it vibrate on the wretch's ear,

Sweeter than music. "Prince," she cry'd, "I come
 " To free from weak regret thy manly mind,
 " And vindicate thy wrongs.—To deeds of death
 " Rise then! my steel shall point thy way."—She spoke,
 And clasp'd him to her bosom. Thro' his frame
 Ran fierce emotions of tumultuous joy;
 He spurn'd the fond complaint; no more the sigh
 Burst from his heart; his eyes forgot to weep;
 Ambition now was hush'd, the patriot hope
 Expired; and love himself the rule resign'd
 To one unbounded thirst of dread revenge.

True to the tenor of her magic voice,
 'Twas he whose genius form'd the great design,
 That promis'd death or freedom; who infus'd
 His glowing spirit 'midst the crowd of slaves,
 Restrain'd the daring, rous'd the languid breast,
 And bad them move obedient to his will,
 As tho' one soul inspir'd them. His command
 Had urg'd them on to action; he had led
 The way to conquest; and his vigorous arm

Had

Had wrench'd a dagger from the English chief,
 And plung'd it in his heart.—But vain the strife;
 Nor strength, nor courage, nor th' inspiring hope
 Of vengeance aught avail. Cymbello saw
 The fruitless conflict, saw around him fall
 His slaughter'd fellows; whilst the wily foe
 Secur'd from danger, dealt the leaden deaths
 In swift rotation.—In wild agony
 He turn'd his eyes; when full before him stood
 His lov'd Kiaza. As the sudden flash
 Of lightning, gliding o'er the vault of night,
 Gilds with its momentary blaze, the path
 Of some lone traveller, 'midst the wintry storm,
 Then sinks in darkness; thus a beam of joy
 Diffus'd its transient lustre.—Swift he flew,
 He clasp'd the maid, whose sinking head reclin'd
 Upon his bosom—grief restrain'd the power
 Of utterance, and the big distress was told
 In silent tears.—With looks of ardent love
 He o'er her hung; and now his faltering voice

Effay'd her name ; but shrinking from his arms,
 She fell a lifeless corse. The level'd death
 Aim'd at her lover, had transfix'd her heart.
 —Cymbello rais'd his steel ;—a frantic smile
 Pass'd o'er his cheek ;—the deadly weapon pierc'd
 Life's fragile barrier ; near the maid he fell,
 Embrac'd her in his languid grasp, and died.

Shall fancy then, before the awful shrine.
 Of public justice, dare intrude her step,
 And with false tints, and wanton pencil, stain
 Th' unfullied robe of truth?—Ah deem not so,
 Ye advocates of mercy !—Her weak hand
 Wou'd catch some feature of that demon form,
 That tramples o'er creation.—But in vain
 She strives to mark the terrors of his mien ;
 For whilst she gazes, darker shades o'erspread
 His deep deformities. Th' historian's skill,
 The poet's energy, the painter's art,
 Shrink from the contest : nor shall fancy's eye,

Select a deed of more transcendant guilt,
 Whose crimson lustre pales not, when compar'd
 With the deep hue of his unvarnish'd crimes.

—But soft—perchance a tale of private woe,
 May lightly touch the mind : or shou'd it prompt
 The tear of sympathy, may fail to rouse
 Those strong emotions, that indignant glow
 Which virtue feels, when generous aims inspire
 Consenting bosoms ; and the holy flame
 Of freedom, only leads her votaries on,
 To more immediate ruin. Hither then,
 Ye impotent of soul, who falsely deem,
 That heav'n's impartial gifts are circumscrib'd
 To colour, and to climate.—Hither too
 Ye studious of mankind, who ceaseless urge
 Th' historic toil ; and trace th' illustrious deeds
 Of former days, when Greece, and Rome, were free ;
 For with their proudest names, a faithful band
 Of these, the fable children of the sun,

Whom

Whom modern pride disdains, whom avarice dooms
 To pain, and insult, shall contest the palm
 Of high unconquer'd courage.—Listen then,
 Whilst truth restrains the muse's wandering step,
 And gives her awful sanction to the song.

From proud ANGOLA, o'er the western main
 A vessel held her course; her wide womb fill'd
 With men of firmer soul.—Distrust and fear
 Induc'd severe restraint;—restraint awak'd
 The thirst of vengeance; till to madness rous'd,
 They dar'd th' unequal war.—But humbled soon
 By undeserv'd misfortune, and abash'd,
 That victory smil'd not on their bold design;
 Amidst the deep recesses of the hold,
 Which day-light visits not, the vanquish'd train
 Withdrew them—pleas'd amidst congenial gloom,
 To hide their sorrows from the victors' eye,
 And weep their undistinguish'd hours away.
 —Above them, with redoubled bolts secur'd,

The iron gratings frown'd ; design'd to bar
 Th' ascent, 'till at the destin'd port arriv'd,
 The rebel throng again should meet the day.
 But nature, kinder than relentless man,
 Mock'd at th' attempt ; and in her weakness strong,
 Controll'd his harsh design.—Amongst the slaves
 A swift contagion spread ; from scanty food,
 From putrid water, and imprison'd air,
 Engender'd.—Shuddering now with selfish fear,
 Resentment dropt her rod ; and Avarice flew
 To shield his treasure ; once again were op'd
 The doors, and on the breezy deck were led
 Th' emaciate crowd of slaves ; but not in throngs
 Promiscuous, for suspicion, yet alarm'd
 By former dangers, into number'd ranks
 Had class'd them ; and with chains, together bound
 Thrice five reluctant wretches : for an hour
 Allow'd to breathe the gale ; then seek again
 Their loathsome dungeon, whilst successive ranks
 Of equal number, occupied the place.

Mark !

Mark! on the deck a train of sufferers fit
 Close rang'd and link'd; meanwhile a chearful gale
 Fills the broad canvas; and the vessel skims
 Light, o'er the dashing brine.—But see, their breasts
 Beat high!—a look of secret joy illumines
 Each sable front!—their shivering limbs confess
 The unexpress'd idea!—See they rise,
 At once they rise; and with consenting step
 Rush towards the prow!—A momentary glance
 Gives the dread signal; and they headlong plunge
 Amidst the ocean.—Haste, ye heedless crew,
 Haste check the sails, and sidelong to the breeze
 Oppose the vessel's breadth; for see, again,
 Your captives from the circling waves emerge,
 And rang'd in order, once again approach
 The ship, and court a parley! Now discard
 Your looks ferocious; in your alter'd eye
 Let kindness beam, and sordid interest wear
 The mask of mercy:—of a kinder fate,
 Of fruitful shores, in early prospect speak;

And

And let the sound of freedom, drop like balm
 Upon their wounded feelings.—Hear they not?—
 —They hear and spurn the treachery.—High they raise
 Their arms, abhorrent of the chains they bear;
 And sink indignant midst the rolling waves.

Immortal FREEDOM! vivifying fun
 Of every virtue!—when thine energies
 Pervade the breast of man, he rears his head,
 Like some tall plant, majestic, and erect,
 And is what God design'd him.—But thy smile
 Withdrawn, he grovels in the dust, and soils
 The honours of his brow.—O be it mine
 To sound aright thy praises! At my birth,
 What, tho' the Muses smil'd not, nor distill'd
 Their dews hyblean.—O'er my infant couch,
 What tho' they scatter'd not their fading flowers,
 Yet thou wast present:—thy diviner flame
 Play'd round my head;—impatient of controul,
 My young step followed where thou ledst the way;

And far as memory traces back my years,
 My soul, tho' touch'd with social sympathies,
 Revolted at oppression.—Nymph divine !
 If from the sound of Milton's golden lyre ;
 Of Thomson's Doric pipe, that pour'd thy praise
 In one full tide of music ; and the strain
 Of him, who sick of outrage and of wrong,
 Sigh'd for “ a lodge in some vast wilderness,
 “ Some boundless continuity of shade,”
 Thou now withhold thine audience :—hither turn
 Indulgent ; for tho' sweeter song hath charm'd,
 Yet praise sincerer never met thine ear.

Recall we then the days, when from the shores
 Of elder Greece, from Rome's imperial bound,
 Burst forth exulting Pæans. Thence they hail'd
 Their patroness and pride : but oft their songs
 Mistook thy genuine glory ; and prophan'd
 Thy name, idolatrous.—Ah ! cou'd the breath
 Of incense please thee ? or the sound of pipes

Clamo-

Clamorous ? whilst wafted on the self-same gale,
 The groans of slaughter'd Helots pierc'd thine ears ;
 Or the shrill shriek of slaves, that unaccus'd,
 Expir'd upon the rack ?—For this thy wrath
 Was kindled ; soon at thy vindictive frown,
 Their lofty towers, and strong cemented walls,
 Shook to their base : thine heav'nly temper'd spear
 Struck the firm earth ; and from the teeming North,
 And furious East, the torrents of thine ire
 Rush'd, ready to destroy. Where once thy smile
 Bad yellow harvests wave, and Plenty pour
 Her unexhausted horn ; where once thy voice
 Inspir'd the patriot breast, and steel'd the arm
 Inimical to tyrants ; priests and slaves
 Now people all the land ; and squalid want
 Sits on the desert champain, and derides
 The vows, that idly rise to heaven, and ask
 Its undeserv'd indulgence. From their fate,
 Ye nations learn, that what ye free receive,
 Ye freely give : and O beware the touch

Of foul domestic slavery! that inflills
 Its deadly venom thro' each secret pore,
 And taints the vital source of public weal.

But why, O nymph! shall man's averted eye,
 Whene'er thy brighter radiance stands confest,
 Shrink from the blaze? What tho' thy port sublime
 Inspire deep reverence; yet thy brow severe
 Is temper'd mild with mercy: tho' thy frown
 Turn pale the crimson on the tyrant's cheek,
 Yet not the dews of evening softer fall
 On the parch'd verdure, than thy look benign
 On all th' extended race of human kind:
 Nor veil'st thou now the glories of thy mien
 As erst, impervious. Open is thy shrine;
 Nor mute thine oracles; nor pour they forth
 Ambiguous voices. There, thine handmaids, stand
 The heavn-descended Sciences; and there
 The train of Arts assiduous: those thy name
 Exalt in grateful hymns; whilst these arrest

The fleeting sound, and give to lands remote,
 And ages yet to come, the genuine song.
 And now, the kindling nations feel the strain;
 And starting from their lethargy, that seem'd
 The fatal sleep of death; exulting, hail
 The day-spring of thine empire. Even they,
 The sons of Seine, and Loire, have thrown aside
 The flimsy covering, that but ill conceal'd
 Their inward pangs; nor more, with idiot joy,
 Dance to the sound, and glitter of their chains.
 Led on by thee, they learn to know their worth,
 And claim the rights of men; and who shall dare,
 When justice arms, and liberty inspires,
 To place a barrier to their bold career?

And see, the adamantine doors unfold;
 And from the center of thy temple beams
 A strong, but temperate light; that plays serene
 Around thine awful form. The song is mute,
 And mute the choral symphonies: a pause

Of solemn silence, on the wondering sense
 Imposes deep attention : now bursts forth
 Thine energetic voice ; and whilst it thrills
 Thro' every vein, the firm dilated soul
 Feels more than mortal : all the nobler powers
 Of man, are up in arms, and throng to join
 Thy standard ; firm integrity, and truth,
 And spotless honour, and impartial love,
 And uncorrupted justice. Hear the sound,
 Ye nations ! nor refuse the sacred strain
 Thro' the faint medium of a mortal tongue.

“ O sons of men ! O progeny belov'd
 “ Of every climate, and of every huc,
 “ Who court the boon 'tis mine alone to give—
 “ —Approach, nor trembling—Lo ! the prize is yours,
 “ Your general birthright ! Nor more freely blows
 “ Th' impartial breath of Heaven, than I diffuse
 “ My blessings. Why then, heedless of the good
 “ That courts you, wou'd ye quit the golden day,

“ For

“ For the deep gloom of ignorance ; where dwell
 “ A thousand spectre forms, the hateful brood
 “ Of fancy, when she vainly shun’d the grasp
 “ Of terror? Who that saw the chrystal spring
 “ Gush plenteous from its source, wou’d turn his step
 “ To drink pollution from the flagrant pool?
 “ —O shame to manhood ! that the sacred light
 “ Of reason, damp’d by fear, should faintly pour
 “ An half-extinguish’d blaze ! or lend its aid,
 “ Whilst avarice, and ambition, forge the chains
 “ That bind the vulgar herd ; who bow their necks,
 “ And from obedience arrogate applause !

“ Yet is not man forsaken :—from the seats
 “ Of light empyreal ; where, estrang’d from earth,
 “ Awhile my steps delay’d, again I come
 “ The harbinger of joy. For since the day,
 “ When Britain’s sons, inquisitive, explor’d
 “ The tyrant’s warrant ; and his angry frown,
 “ With angry frowns withstood ; my ready aid,

“ Infus’d

“ Infus'd a secret vigor thro' the land ;
 “ In toils and death unconquer'd.—Thence arose
 “ That equaliz'd dominion, liberal rule,
 “ Where not dependant on the fovereign breath,
 “ The people hold their rights ; but just restraints
 “ Affect the whole, and leave each portion free ;
 “ As yon bright orbs revolve their fated rounds,
 “ Each in its sphere ; yet feel the strong controul
 “ Of relative dependance.—Nor shall cease
 “ The fair example, till thro' Europe's bounds
 “ It spread ; and wondering nations emulate
 “ This last lov'd offspring of my riper cares.

“ But ah ! what founds of sorrow load the gale,
 “ And wild complaints, and bursting sighs, and groans
 “ Like those of parting nature ?—'Tis the voice
 “ Of suffering multitudes.—And see, the muse,
 “ —O sight of horror ! on th' astonish'd eye,
 “ Pours all the hated scene.—I see the hand
 “ Of man, against his brother man uprais'd,

“ Wielding

“ Wielding the shameless whip.—I see the wretch
 “ Fall, and cling prostrate round his tyrant’s feet;
 “ Whilst by expressive gestures,—nature’s mute
 “ But powerful eloquence, he vainly strives
 “ To mitigate his fury.—Now he quits
 “ His fainting grasp!—But o’er th’ atrocious deed
 “ O let Oblivion wrap her deepest shade;
 “ Left fiends look on, and blush, that man shall dare
 “ So far beyond the bounds his Maker plac’d.

“ And can it be? that man, by nature form’d
 “ Of powers superior; and to whom disclos’d
 “ Stands the whole order of this earthly frame;
 “ And still more wondrous, all the wider world
 “ Of intellect and reason: from whose mind,
 “ As from a polish’d mirror, bright reflect
 “ On their divine original, the forms
 “ Of virtue, truth and beauty:—say, can he
 “ Allow the mist of interest, to obscure
 “ Those truths, else obvious to his piercing eye?

“ —Ah knows he not, that partial blifs depends
 “ On general happiness ; that when he plants
 “ In nature’s breast a dagger, every part
 “ Partakes the anguish? that the copious stream
 “ Of universal blifs, devolves along
 “ Like some broad river; thro’ its wide extent,
 “ To every nation, and to all mankind,
 “ Diffusing health and gladness; but detach’d
 “ In partial channels, stagnates in its course,
 “ And foul and putrid spreads corruption round.

“ —Yes—he shall learn.—A beam of light divine
 “ Dispels the gloom. From its pursuing blaze,
 “ Swift to the confines of their native hell,
 “ Retire the foes of man.—There slavery clanks
 “ Her broken chains ; there Cruelty his knife,
 “ Tho’ foul’d with blood, aims harmless ; Avarice there
 “ Sighs o’er her fancied loss ; her brittle web,
 “ There Sophistry bewails :—on earth, resounds
 “ The voice of gratulation: realm to realm,

- “ And shore to shore re-echoes with my name ;
“ And to the mercy-seat of God, ascends
“ The odour of a grateful sacrifice,
“ Of truth, and justice, and unbounded love.”

END OF PART SECOND.